

Law Enforcement seizes 1,000 pounds of Asian carp in Boston

Service Law Enforcement special agents and Massachusetts Environmental Police seized some 1,000 pounds of live Asian bighead carp Jan. 26 in Boston's Chinatown, effectively stopping the import of this invasive species throughout New England. The seizure was part of an investigation into wildlife trafficking.

Asian bighead carp can grow to 110 pounds and 5 feet in length. They eat a large amount of aquatic insects and vegetation and reproduce rapidly, outcompeting native fish and causing declines in invertebrate species.

Asian bighead carp were brought to the United States in 1972 to be raised for food. By the early 1980s, the carp had escaped into the Mississippi watershed and now threatens the Great Lakes ecosystem. Together with the Service, the Army Corps of Engineers constructed a \$9 million electric barrier in the Chicago Sanitary Ship Canal to stem the tide of Asian carp into the Great Lakes.

Interstate transportation of invasive species such as Asian carp in violation of state laws becomes a violation of the federal Lacey Act and is punishable by up to five years in prison and a \$250,000 fine per individual or \$500,000 fine per individual.

Learn more: <http://www.fws.gov/midwest/fisheries/topic-asiancarp.htm>